

University of Minnesota Morris Digital Well

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### Chancellor's Column

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## Chancellor's Column



(June 4, 2024) Earlier this month, the University of Minnesota Morris celebrated with graduates and their families at our 61st commencement. It was the first time since 2018 that we have been able to hold the ceremonies outside on the mall, and it was wonderful!

The class of 2024 deserved to have a big, boisterous celebration, after spending at least the first half of their college years navigating the turbulent waters of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Despite that, or maybe because of that, this class is one to be recognized for their achievements:

- Almost one-third of the class are first-generation college graduates;
- Nearly a quarter of this class graduated with academic distinction, earning a GPA of 3.75 or above; and
- 57 of our graduating Cougar student athletes together earned 81 Academic All-UMAC Awards, including an Academic All-American.

University of Minnesota Interim President Jeff Ettinger was our commencement speaker, and I think he summed up the Morris experience pretty well: “This beautiful, sustainable campus gives students the space to be themselves, follow their passions, and find their purpose.”

The summer ahead includes new student registration events and lots of other visitors to campus, and we're excited in particular about two events we're hosting on campus in June. The first, the 17 Rooms Day of Sustainability, will be held on Wednesday, June 12. We have partnered with the West Central Initiative Fund and Morris Model for this event. Each room will explore one of the 17 United Nations Sustainable Development Goals. Event details are available at [wcif.org](http://wcif.org), and everyone is welcome to join this conversation. Please sign up if you're interested.

We are also excited to welcome students to Morris from across the state for the Youth Exploring Leadership and Learning Opportunities (YELLO), June 12-15. This is a 4-H leadership conference that prepares youth to learn and lead in their communities.

The summer schedule also includes the summer reunion for the West Central School of Agriculture on July 12 and the Cougar Golf Classic on July 26. Look for our booth at the Stevens County Fair in August. And I hate to get too far ahead of myself, but Homecoming will be Sept. 6-8.

For now, I invite you to take a walk through campus over the summer and enjoy our beautiful grounds and public art. UMN Morris is for you.